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CITY OF HARTFORD SPONSORS VOTE AND VACCINATE EFFORT NOVEMBER 4TH

---MEDIA AND COMMUNITY ADVISORY---

The City of Hartford is sponsoring an influenza (flu) vaccination clinic on **November 4th, Election Day**, as part of a nationwide effort to encourage those who are voting to receive their flu vaccinations at the same time. The clinic will be held at the **South End Wellness, Senior Center, 830 Maple Avenue** from **6:00a.m. to 8:00p.m.** **If you vote, it is not necessary to get a vaccination.** You do NOT need to vote to obtain a vaccination.

This effort is supported by the **Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation** to the Connecticut Public Health Research and Education Fund on behalf of the Connecticut Public Health Association, and is being coordinated by the Connecticut Influenza and Pneumococcal Immunization Coalition.

This project is also made possible by the assistance of the Hartford Registrars of Voters.

Influenza (flu) causes more than 200,000 hospitalizations and an average of 36,000 deaths each year in the U.S. Although about 1 in 5 Americans will get the flu each year, many do not get vaccinated. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends an annual influenza vaccination for anyone who wishes to reduce their risk for this severe respiratory illness. Individuals (adults and children) with chronic medical conditions such as diabetes, asthma, or heart disease are particularly at risk of complications from the flu, as are people in nursing, convalescent, or other institutional settings. People 50 years of age or older are also urged to get the influenza vaccine annually. In addition, anyone who is in close contact with high-risk individuals should be immunized to help prevent spreading the virus. This includes parents, grandparents, babysitters, health care workers and caregivers.

People 65 years of age and older and those with certain other medical conditions are also at higher risk for severe illness caused by pneumococcal disease, which is responsible for more than 40,000 deaths in the U.S. each year. Pneumococcal vaccination coverage rates for people 65 years of age and older remain at slightly under 64 percent, which is well below the "Healthy People 2010" objective of 90 percent. The costs of both the influenza and pneumococcal vaccines are covered under Medicare Part B.

For more information on this effort, contact Tung Nguyen, MPH, Epidemiologist, Hartford Health & Human Services at (860) 543-8826 or Carol Steinke, Public Health Nurse Supervisor at 547-1426 x 7011. For more information on national Vote and Vax effort see: www.voteandvax.org. For a complete list of Vote and Vax sites in CT go to: www.ct.gov/dph "Featured links" and click on <Seasonal Influenza> or www.lungct.org